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The Centenary
of the
Star-Spangled Banner
(Illustrated)

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One Hundredth Anniversary

of the Writing of the

“Star-Spangled Banner”

AMERICA is doing honor to one who, while his soul was throbbing with anxiety for the fate of his country and a devoted city, gave expression to his intense patriotism in the song of a battle from which the Stars and Stripes emerged victoriously in the gray dawn of a September morning, one hundred years ago. That song has become famous and is now known far and wide as the “Star-Spangled Banner.”

The one hundredth anniversary of the inspired poem is being celebrated in Baltimore with intense enthusiasm, which reaches its climax September 14th, the actual anniversary of the writing of the poem. During this Centennial Week the President and many other notable men of the country assemble to pay homage to the author, Francis Scott Key.

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The Mayor of Baltimore, in his desire to make this a national celebration, has requested the chief executives of every city in the land to order flags to be unfurled from all staffs under municipal control from September 6th to 13th, and to request that the Stars and Stripes shall wave over business institutions and residences everywhere.



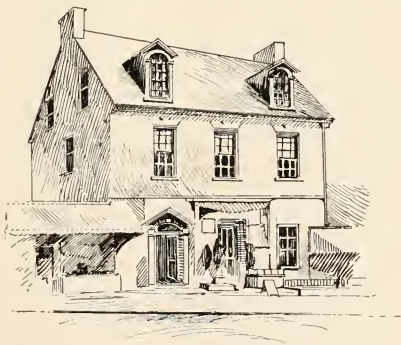
The events connected with the writing of this song form one of the most interesting chapters in the annals of our country, and the thrilling story should be familiar to every one to whom Old Glory is an inspiration to worthier living.

The hymn had its inception in the fierce tumult of a battle, upon the issue of which depended the fate of a devoted city; and its birth-throes, in the gray dawning of an autumn morning, were in the breast of a noble patriot whose heart was filled with anxiety over the doubtful termination of the fight.

Early in the fall of 1814 the British

The Star-Spangled Banner

troops and ships met with little opposition in their attack on the city of Washington, in which they were successful in destroying the Capitol, White House and many important documents. With a similar intent on the city of Baltimore, Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane, in command of the British naval forces, and General Ross, in com-



BIRTHPLACE OF FRANCIS SCOTT KEY

mand of the land forces, set sail for that city. With the fleet went Dr. William Beanes of Upper Marlborough, an American prisoner on board one of the ships. If Dr. Beanes had been free at that time the "Star-Spangled Banner" never would have been written.

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The doctor's capture was due to a peculiar circumstance. He had entertained several English officers in his home and had made the best of the enforced situation. In the fortunes of war Dr. Beanes acted as a gentleman should, and in spite of his patriotism was an agreeable host.

When the British withdrew from Washington they were beset by a terrific storm which gave their withdrawal much the appearance of a retreat. Dr. Beanes and several of his friends immediately started to celebrate what they thought to be an American victory. Three British soldiers straggling along after the main force were apprehended by the doctor and his friends and placed in jail. One of these men having escaped, met a body of English horsemen, and the latter returned to the rescue, arresting the doctor. For a time things looked serious for the American, and there were even hints of a "hanging at the yard-arm." The news reached Washington, and a brilliant young attorney of Georgetown, Francis Scott Key, and a friend, John S. Skinner, commissioner in the exchange of prisoners, set out to release Dr. Beanes.

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Being a leading citizen in the section, it was determined to save him if at all possible.

The young lawyer obtained permission of President Madison to use a small cartel-ship, the *Minden*, and with Mr. Skinner, hastened to Baltimore. They were soon on their way down the Chesapeake Bay in search of the British fleet, which they found at the mouth of the Potomac River preparing for an attack on Baltimore.

When they were received by Admiral Cochrane, Key and Skinner were informed that it had been the intention of the commander to use the aforementioned yard-arm in connection with Dr. Beanes, until it was learned that the doctor had not only been an admirable host, but had also attended the wounds of several British officers who were injured in the Battle of Bladensburg, one of the fights in the vicinity of Washington.

Admiral Cochrane granted the request of Skinner and Key, but refused to allow them to return to Baltimore. It was his intention to attack the city and he wanted no warning given before

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the approach of his ships; therefore, the three Americans were compelled to stand idly on the deck of their ship watching the walls of Fort McHenry, on the Patapsco River, appear through the distance as it became more and more evident that it was the intention of the fleet to attack this key to Baltimore.

After landing General Ross and his forces at North Point, the fleet formed in a semicircle across the river for the attack on the fort, about two and a half miles away, which is thus described in Admiral Cochrane's report to the British Admiralty: "I hoisted my flag on the *Surprise*, and with the remainder of the frigates, bomb sloops, and the rocket ship, passed further up the river. At daybreak the next morning, September 13th, the bomb ships having taken their stations within shell range, supported by the *Surprise*, with the other frigates and sloops, opened their fire upon the fort that protected the harbor."

The destruction of the fleet with modern coast artillery would have been but a matter of moments, but in those days Fort McHenry was not so equipped. Its forty-two-pounders were

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incapable of reaching the fleet. The low-lying, squatty-looking little brick-and-earth fort seemed insignificant, and it has been stated that on this account its commander, Lieutenant Colonel George Armistead, had received orders not to attempt defense against the attack of the British fleet. Doubtless he fought more heroically, knowing that a court martial would await him for disobeying orders if he failed.

Just before the opening of the battle, the three Americans were placed on board of their own ship, under guard of marines to prevent their landing, and the boat was anchored in a position which commanded an excellent view of the engagement.

At sunset the flag was still waving from the ramparts. Then began the long night vigil of the three friends. The strain of anxious waiting was tremendous. Now and then a shell burst near the fort, showing by its glare that our flag was still flying. Sleep was, of course, out of the question. There was nothing to do but wait.

About midnight the firing ceased; but an hour later the ships, having moved closer, opened a terrific fire which was



"OLD GLORY"

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continued for some time. Then again the firing ceased. Torn with anxiety, fearing lest the cessation of fire meant that the fort had been taken, they sought to learn the all-important thing,—was the flag still flying?

The supreme moment of their lives came when, through the mists of the dawn, the flag was discovered “gallantly streaming” in all its peerless beauty over the ramparts of the fort. The hymn, which had been forming in Key’s mind as he watched for the flag, burst forth in the moment of his great joy, and found its birthplace on the back of an old envelope.

Key and his friends were then allowed to land. It developed that the land forces had been defeated and that General Ross had been killed. It was the receipt of this news that had caused Admiral Cochrane to turn loose on the fort all the fury of his armament at one o’clock in the morning.

Key completed his poem on the way to the shore, and the following morning showed it to his brother-in-law, Judge Nicholson, who realizing its rare merits, took it at once to a Baltimore printer, who published it as a small



GLED BANNER"

saw "O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming," in the
the National Museum (1910)



THE ORIGINAL "STAR-SPANGLED BANNER"

This flag, now in the National Museum at Washington, is the one which Francis Pickens saw on September 14, 1814, and which inspired our national hymn. The flag was

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handbill. In a short time that handbill had become the prized possession of thousands. It was set to the tune of an old hymn, "Anachreon in Heaven," by John Stafford Smith, and was first sung in the Holliday Street Theatre, Baltimore, by Ferdinand Durang, after which its popularity spread throughout the length and breadth of the nation. It played an important part in the Battle of New Orleans, which was fought more than two weeks after the signing of the treaty of peace in Ghent, in December, 1814.



In every respect Key was worthy of the honor of having his anthem adopted as the national hymn. He was, in the full sense of the word, a Christian gentleman, and although he wrote several poems of merit, and was remarkable as a lawyer and statesman, is known almost entirely to-day as the author of the "Star-Spangled Banner." He was born on his father's estate, Terra Rubra, in Frederick, Maryland, on August 1st, 1779. After graduating from St. John's College, Annapolis, he practised law for some time in Frederick. Later he re-

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moved to Georgetown, D. C. For three terms he was district attorney of the District of Columbia. He died in Baltimore, January 11th, 1843. Every Memorial Day the flag which constantly floats over his grave in Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Frederick, is renewed by loving hands.

The first monument in memory of the poet was erected in what was not even United States territory at the time of the attack on Baltimore, or, in fact, for many years afterward. Golden Gate Park, San Francisco, is the home of the first statue to Francis Scott Key. On the one hundred and eighteenth anniversary of his birth, August 9th, 1898, a beautiful monument was erected in Frederick, Maryland, by the people of that town.

Physically he was described as being "tall, erect and of admirable proportions. There dwelt usually upon his handsome and winning features a soft and touching pensiveness of expression, almost bordering on sadness, but which, in moments of special excitement, or when anything occurred to awaken the dormant heroism of his nature, or to

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call into action the higher power of vigorous and well-cultivated intellect, gave place to a bright ethereality of aspect and noble audacity of tone which pleased while it dazzled the beholder."

A few years before his death, Mr. Key thus spoke, at a banquet, of the attack on Baltimore: "I witnessed the preparation for the assault, and saw the array of enemies as they advanced to the attack. I heard the sound of battle, the noise of the conflict fell upon my listening ear and told me that the brave and the free had met the invaders. Then did I remember that Maryland had called her sons to the defense of the flag, and that they were the sons of sires who had left their crimson footprints on the snows of the North, and poured out the blood of patriots, like water, on the sands of the South. Then did I remember that there were gathered around that banner, among its defenders, men who had heard and answered the call of their country, from these mountainsides and from this beautiful valley and from this fair city of my native country; and though I walked

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upon a deck surrounded by a hostile fleet, yet was my step firm and my heart strong as these recollections came upon me. Through the clouds of war, the stars of that banner still shone in my view, and I saw the discomfited host of the assailants driven back in ignominy to their ships. Then, in that hour of deliverance and joyful triumph, the heart spoke; and do not such a country and such defenders of their country deserve a song? was the question. With it came an inspiration not to be resisted; and if it had been a hanging matter to make a song, I must have made it. Let the praise then, if any be due, be given not to me, who did what I could not help doing, but to the inspirers of the song!"



The flag which floated from Fort McHenry during the attack by the British was in itself interesting, and the greater portion of it still remains preserved in the National Museum at Washington. A reproduction from a photograph taken at Washington is shown on another page.

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Its proportions were large, measuring thirty by forty feet, originally. It was made by Mrs. Mary Pickersgill, formerly Mary Young, a Philadelphia girl, born in the year of Independence, February 12th, 1776. It was in the days when a stripe as well as a star was added to the flag for each new state. When it was found to be growing larger, with a prospect of soon being unshapely, the addition of new stripes was abandoned, the flag was returned to its original proportions and the thirteen stripes representing the original states were made permanent.

Mary Pickersgill's flag had fifteen stripes, each two feet wide, and fifteen stars, each two feet in diameter. The blue field rested on the ninth stripe, a red one, instead of the eighth and white stripe as in the present flag.

A piece cut out from one of its corners is said to be buried with one of the old defenders of the fort, who made a dying request that a bit of the flag be placed over his dead heart.

During the battle the flag was struck eleven times, one shell cutting out one of the stars.

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The flag floated over the tent that sheltered General Lafayette when he was entertained at Fort McHenry, September 14th, 1824; and was carried in the funeral procession of Colonel Armistead, who died April 25th, 1818, and was buried in the old St. Paul burying ground, Baltimore. It was exhibited at the Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia, 1876, and at the Old South Church, Boston, June 14th, 1877, the centennial of the adoption of the flag by Congress. At the Peace Festival in Boston, June 15th, 1869, the "Star-Spangled Banner" was sung by ten thousand voices, with full orchestra, drum corps, chiming bells and artillery accompaniments. The effect was electrical, and the greatest enthusiasm prevailed.

It is not generally known that Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes added a verse to the poem at the outbreak of the Civil War. It is as follows:

"When our land is illumined with Liberty's smile,
If a foe from within strikes a blow at her glory,
Down, down with the traitor who dares to defile
The flag of her stars and the page of her story:

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By the millions of unchained when our birthright
 was gained,
We will keep her bright blazon for ever un-
 stained:
And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph shall
 wave
While the land of the free is the home of the
 brave."

In a Flag Day address before the clerks of his department, June 14th, 1914, Secretary Franklin K. Lane, of the Interior Department, Washington, D. C., imagines our country's flag speaking as follows:

"I am whatever you make me, nothing more. I am your belief in yourself, your dream of what a people may become. I live a changing life, a life of moods and passions, of heart-breaks and tired muscles. Sometimes I am strong with pride, when men do an honest work, fitting the rails together truly; sometimes I droop, for then purpose has gone from me, and cynically I play the coward. Sometimes I am loud, garish and full of that ego which blasts judgment; but always I am all that you hope to be and have the courage to try for. I am song and fear, struggle and panic, and ennobling hope.

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I am the day's work of the weakest man, and the largest dream of the most far-
ing. . . . I am no more than you
believe me to be, and I am all that you
believe I can be. I am what you make
me, nothing more. I swing before you
as a bright gleam of color, a symbol
of yourself, the pictured suggestion of
that big thing which makes this nation.
My stars and my stripes are your
dreams and your labors. They are
bright with cheer, brilliant with courage,
firm with faith, because you have made
them so out of your hearts, for you are
the makers of the flag, and it is well
that you glory in the making!"



It is eminently fitting that the memory of the author of "The Star Spangled Banner" should be honored. Although Congress has not seen fit to nationalize his famous lines, they are enshrined in the hearts of over 100,000,000 patriotic Americans whose proudest possession is the Stars and Stripes. May they wave forever!

The Star-Spangled Banner

Oh say! can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hail'd at the twilight's
last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, thro' the
perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watch'd were so gallantly
streaming?
And the rockets' red glare, the bombs bursting
in air,
Gave proof thro' the night that our flag was
still there.
Oh say! does that star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the
brave?

On the shore, dimly seen thro' the midst of the
deep
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence
reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering
steep
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half dis-
closes?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first
beam,
In full glory reflected, now shines on the stream;
'Tis the star-spangled banner, oh! long may it
wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the
brave!

Oh! thus be it e'er when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's deso-
lation;
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-
rescued land
Praise the pow'r that hath made and preserv'd
us a nation;
Then conquer we must when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto, "In God is our trust."
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall
wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the
brave.





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